BITS,BYTES&PIXELS

LIMA 99/4A USERS GROUP

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REVIEW OF TERM 80

by Gil Parrish
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It's hard to tell what I found most amazing about the "Term 80" terminal communications program for the TI 99/4a:

(1) That this all-machine-language software offered such powerful features, including 80-column text (without panning left and right), full-color ANSI graphics; support for up to 19,200 baud transmissions and autodialing, and TI-BBS Xmodem, Xmodem-CRC, Xmodem-1K, Ymodem Batch, and ASCII transfers;

(2) That it could work on a plain-vanilla TI disk system (drive controller, 32K RAM expansion, RS-232 card or sidecar, and at least one DSSD disk drive), with no special 80-column card needed (and in fact, it would NOT work on a Geneve); or,

(3) That the programmer of Term 80, Jeffrey Brown, started it in August of 1994 when he was 11 years old!

Anyway, not being a TI "guru" (though I have experience on other systems and BBS ing), plus having very much a plain vanilla TI system, I was interested in what this program could do. I learned that the software, which as of this writing is up to version 3.1.4 with a date of October 27, 1995, came in two flavors: a "crippled" free version which can be publicly distributed but has important features (like autodialing and download capabilities) disabled, and the complete commer cial version which is available from Jeff for $20 Canadian or $15 U.S., plus $3 for media and postage. I purchased the complete, commercial package.

Physically, the software arrived on two disks. The disks contained (among other material) four arced segments, which then had to be de-arced to four DSSD disks . The segments were the main program, the configuration utilities to set up the main program and autodialer as desired, certain other utilities, and the documentation files. A de-arcing program was included on one of the disks; all I needed to supply was a machine language boot program (E/A #5), and TI-Writer to read /print the doc files. (Both of these features are included in Funnelweb, as you know.)

The main documentation file (TERM80_DOC) presented something of a problem. Jeff apparently wrote it on another computer, and the file was too long to all fit in the TI-Writer text buffer on my system. While I recalled that loading files in segments was possible under TI-Writer, this sent me scrambling in the direction of my TI-Writer manual to figure out how to do so. To save you some time, I inally accomplished it by printing the first chunk that did fit in the buffer, and noting the last line present (527). I then started over, and after entering the LF (LoadFile) command, gave this as the file name:

528 2000 DSK2.TERM80_DOC

with "528" being the next line I needed, and "2000" being a dummy variable large enough to be past the last line number that would fit in the buffer. After I rinted the second segment, I noted the last line number (452), added that number to the last line number of the previous segment (527), and used in my following LF command that sum (979) plus 1 to load the last chunk:

980 2000 DSK2.TERM80_DOC

Of course, if Jeff changes the material in his docs, the above numbers may well change too, so it's important you know the concept and not just the keystrokes. Anyway, the final result was docs about 20 pages in length (no page breaks or margins). Jeff recommends you read the docs carefully, and so do I.

That done, I ran some configuration utilities to set up the main program and the autodialer with the phone numbers I wanted to call. Configuration functions are menu driven; you basically type the letter associated with the area you want to configure, then either type in the needed info or press the letter of the particular setting you want to change, causing it to toggle or rotate to another setting Pressing ENTER will then get you out of that routine and (if done at the main menu) will exit the utility entirely and save your revised settings to disk . I did not at that point think much "configuration" needed to be done; I certainly was not going to mess with "modem initialization strings" and such. And as to the autodialer configuration, filling in the "system name" and "system number " was fairly self-obvious--wasn't it? No, it wasn't, as I later learned when he autodialer would not work. This is one of those places where I should have read the docs more carefully.

The configuration utilities, and ultimately the main terminal program, brought me into contact with the 80-column screen, where my first reaction was, frankly, disappointment. One reason for the lack of quality of the picture was the character set displayed. In order to squeeze 80 columns onto the TI screen, the char acter matrix for each letter is only 6 dots high by 3 dots wide, with no space between the characters. If you take out a piece of paper and try to draw characers in that amount of space, you will see that some work better than others, e.g . a capital "E" or "T" is easy, but how do you draw a capital "N" or "W"? And f course, with no spaces between the letters, certain characters run into each ther rather badly, such as where a "4" (with 6 dots in its

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third column) is followed by a "6" (with 6 dots in its first column). The result is somewhat impressionistic-- you can't get up too close and still be able to see the pattern. Pulling back a bit and looking at overall words and sentences works.

The character set aside, the video on a TV or color monitor may display ghosts, shadows, color bleeding, or other unfortunate effects that made the fine text hard to decipher. There are several routes to try. The docs mention a hardware kick (basically removing one resistor in the /4a and substituting another with a different value) that is supposed to eliminate shadows and improve the picture by 40%. Jeff indicates he has never tried this himself, and I decided to skip it as well. Another fix, built into the program, is the easy ability to toggle the ANSI color off while keeping ANSI graphics; simple light text on a dark backgr ound tends to work better than colors in many instances. This was better, but could still result in poor readability. My personal innovation, not mentioned in the docs, was to use a composite monochrome monitor. Since "nobody" now uses monochrome (also called "black and white", although the display is typically green or amber), these things go for as cheap as $5 to $10 when you can find one at a used computer store.

The program itself autoboots to a menu for loading the main program or certain support utilities. It is "keyboard intensive"; various menus are a function keystroke away, but you'll have to remember what the keystrokes are because there's no on-screen reminder. However, a help menu is also a function keystroke away, and in any event, the autodialer menu and perhaps the upload and download menus are probably the only ones you'll use on a day to day basis once everything is configured. The keyboard is slow to respond to the strokes for pulling up the autodialer and such; it is sometimes necessary to press and hold the keys a couple of seconds. There is a setting for increasing keyboard scan rates, but the docs seemed to indicate that faster settings might take away time from something else, so I left it on "normal".

I started with a direct connection between two computers, so I could test the high-end 19.2K communications. Remember here that your RS-232 port is "backwards" from the normal standard (I guess because it was designed primarily for printer usage). To hook up a TI directly to a different model of computer, you use straight-through cables and NOT a null modem adapter. To hook the computer to a modem you DO need a null modem adapter or a cable with lines 2 and 3 crossed. Typing back and forth between the two units at 19.2K worked fine, so I decided to try some file transfers. I first downloaded a 70K text file to my TI floppy dri ve using the Xmodem protocol. I guess because of lack of buffer space, the prog ram would receive 1K, then pause to save that to disk, and so on. Total transfer time for 70K was about 5 minutes, 48 seconds. Another test using Ymodem Batch in 1K segments resulted in a little faster time.

It was at this point that I got in over my head. For one thing, the ASCII sequential files were landing on my II in DIS/FIX 128 format, rather than the DIS/VAR 80 that TI-Writer uses. So, while I'm sure there must be a way to view or conv ert these files, I have no idea what it is. Further, the TI absolutely, positively refused to do uploads, under any protocol or set of conditions I could devise. The procedure would start, errors would register, and the process would abort. I never have figured out if this was a software problem or stupid user error ("SUE"), although I'm glad I have the download capability if I can only have one or the other.

I switched to a real modem and 2400 baud for calls around town. I started to notice here several little "extras" built into the program. At startup, the program will check your machine for various add-on goodies (like real-time clocks and certain RAM expanders) and will make use of them if available. The program, as an audio cue, plays a brief but quite pleasant set of tones upon board connect. Login macros are supported. And, a screensaver is included to start up a simple abstract moving graphic if the keyboard is left alone about ten minutes.

But doing actual BBS calls ended up being the most time consuming and frustrating part of my testing. I first encountered the software's irritating habit of flashing irrelevant lines on the screen during scrolls. The finished screen would come out fine, but the flashing lines made the screen hard to read during the actual scroll. Then I ran into a more serious problem, being that while I could call some boards and consistently have no problems at all, I could call other boards and get complete gibberish. This started me doing lots of tinkering with the various available settings. Some of the problem turned out to be more SUE's (e.g., calling CompuServe without remembering that it uses a 7E1 setting though he rest of the world uses 8N1), but some wasn't. A few boards (that I could contact fine on other computers) seemed to consistently produce problems, regardless of the settings. One board in particular apparently sent a "killer" code not long after logon that would inevitably scramble the screen

Among other things I eventually tried to remedy the situation, I sped up scans of the RS-232 port, thinking that perhaps it was losing characters. But, that actually seemed to make things worse. That made me wonder-- would even slower be better? So despite the fact it made no logical sense to me, I tried changing the scan rate from "normal" to "slow". I thereafter seemed to get better results consistently, so I am assuming cause-and-effect. (However, that one board with the "killer" code never did get cured!)

I guess my conclusion is that Term 80 fits in the same category that the Jaguar automobile is reputed to occupy-- a thoroughbred with high performance and lots of luxurious features, but also subject to idiosyncracies and requiring

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considerable tinkering to get it running right. It would probably not be a good choice for a beginner unless pre-configured by some else. This is not to suggest that I personally regret obtaining it: since the BBS world now is largely occupied by 80-column ANSI boards, software like Term 80 is pretty much a "must-have" package for TI users who wish to get into (or keep up with) present-day telecommunications. And the package might become better in the future: Jeff is still at it, so an even fancier version of Term 80 may be down the road with a GUI interface, mouse usage, full support for expanded memory cards, and so forth. But I would n't recommend waiting; the current version of the program does get the job done, and you never know for sure whether future software is coming.

(Term-80 is available from Jeffrey Brown, 2111 Montreal Rd. #102, Glouster, Ontario K1J 8M8, Canada; phone 613-746-1013; or, bb737@freenet.carleton.ca on the Internet. I am at 73430.1546@compuserve.com on the Internet.)

DONE

RECENT DOWNLOADS FROM THE INTERNET NEWSGROUP COMP.SYS.TI

From: Jensen@pop.com (Vern Jensen) Date: Sat, 10 Feb 1996 18:02:48 GMT

I don't know how many people read this group, but since I only get about 5-6 registrations per game I make for the TI, and spend about 1-2 years working on them, I thought I'd try posting here, in case anyone here is interested in a new game. :)

In case you don't get MICROpendium, or missed the short mention of the game a few months back, I'll let you know that I have recently finished my newest shareware game for the TI, Virus Attack. It's basically like Dr. Mario (a popular Nintendo game), which is a fast-paced thinking action game in the Tetris/Columns genre has colorful graphics, sounds effects, continuous background music, many levels, selectable speeds (difficulty), either keyboard or joystick control, and is very responsive, since it is written in c99, an assembly language compiler.

This is my best game yet. Everyone who has played it so far (even Bruce Harrison, our Assembly Language Guru, who made some routines for it), has raved about it. This game is available as shareware for $15 + $2 SH. You can write to me at:

Vern L. Jensen 910 Linda Vista Ave Pasadena, CA 91103

Obviously, I don't make games for the TI to get money, since to do that I would simply make games for the Mac or PC. I make games for the TI because it's FUN, and because of that, I'm in the middle of my next game right now! However, I also enjoy getting letters from people who play my games telling me how much they enjoyed them. And of course, a little money is nice too. :) So help me out! If you know of a newsletter or somewhere that my game could be mentioned (other than MICROpendium), then please mention my game in it! Or if you could upload it to an FTP site, commercial online service, or whatever, let me know, and I'll mail you a free copy of the game if you want. (EMail me first, since I can only do this for one or two people).

I've also written two other games for the TI, Maze Mania and The Castle. They're in XB, so they're rather slow, but you probably won't find any games written in XB that are more polished than these are! (They still require a disk system, since they both use assembly routines in 'em). To find out more, email me. I'm asking only $6 + $2 SH for these games.

-Vern

From: twills@TheRiver.com (Tom Wills) Date: Sun, 11 Feb 1996 16:37:03 MST

For all those who care, my email address has changed to the following: twills@TheRiver.com My secondary address (twills@pima.gov) is still good.

Tom Wills

From Dave.Nieters@dtc.fingerhut.com Thu Feb 15 16:41:38 EST 1996

I am happy to say that I have delivered the final SCSI DSR to Don O'Neil this week for sale at this weekend's Fest West. In fact, he burning version 1.0 into EPROMS right now! Don't be scared by the 1.0 name, though. We have gone through several field test versions to work the bugs out.

I wish I could be able to attend the fair myself, but I am too far away in Minnesota. I do plan to attend the Ohio fair in May and hope to see as many of you as possible.

For all of you going to the fair this weekend, tell Don I say "hi" - and while you're there, buy a SCSI card! (cheap promotional stunt, my apologies).

After the fair is over, I'll be sure to pass along any revies of the SCSI card to comp.sys.ti.

David Nieters Fingerhut Companies

From: dd314@cleveland.Freenet.Edu (Glenn W. Bernasek) Date: 17 Feb 1996 20:12:51 GMT

The logics of just when software becomes Public Domain

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just DOES NOT equate wth the law! Public domain status MUST BE PUBLICLY DECLARED BY THE AUTHOR OR DELECATED REPRESENTATIVE! Copyrights (registered or not) are, by U.S. law, good (enforceable) for the LIFE OF THE AUTHOR + 50 YEARS.

Poor spelling on my part not withstanding, I hope this clarifies the copyright and public domain (freebees) question once and for all.

Apparent abandonment does automatically qualify a work for public domain. Just ask Texas Instruments and the author of TI Emulator.

Glenn

From: dd314@cleveland.Freenet.Edu (Glenn W. Bernasek)
Date: 18 Feb 1996 00:48:37 GMT

**** UPDATE FOR MUG'96 IN BROOK PARK, OHIO ****

BY NOW, MANY OF YOU KNOW THERE'S GOING TO BE A *** FREE *** MULTI-USER GROUPS CONFERENCE FOR THE TI-99/4A AND GENEVE 9640 IN BROOK PARK, OHIO THIS COMING MAY 25.

THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE IS BEING HOSTED BY THE CLEVELAND AREA TI-99/4A USER GROUPS (THE TI-CHIPS AND THE NORTH COAST 99ERS). AND AS AN ADDED FEATURE, FOOD SERVICE WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE CONFERENCE FOR THOSE WHO WON'T HAVE THE TIME TO GO TO ANY OF THE NEARBY RESTAURANTS.

SO, IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR THE TI-99/4A AND/OR GENEVE 9640 YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHOW, SHARE, SELL OR JUST TALK ABOUT, COME TO THE 1996 TI-99/4A AND GENEVE M.U.G. CONFERENCE (MUG'96).

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT MANY OF THE CONFERENCE FAVORITES, THAT HAVE ATTENDED THE LIMA AFFAIR IN THE PAST, HAVE MADE RESERVATIONS FOR TABLES AND/OR DEMO TIME. THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THOSE WHO HAVE PHONED, WROTE OR E-MAILED THEIR REQUEST FOR SPACE AT MUG'96 SO FAR.

TIM TESCH - SI SOFTWARE

BRUCE HARRISON - HARRISON SOFTWARE

MICKEY CENDROWSKI - NOTUNG SOFTWARE WEST PENN 99ERS

JIM KRYCH - SW99ERS (SuperAMS)

RON MARKUS - RAMCHARGED COMPUTERS

MIKE WRIGHT - CaDD ELECTRONICS

INVITATION/FLIERS HAVE BEEN MAILED TO EVERYBODY THAT WE HAVE ADDRESSES FOR. IF WE MISSED ANYONE, PLEASE ACCEPT OUR APOLOGY AND CONSIDER THESE ANNOUNCEMENTS AS OUR INVITATION TO ATTEND AND TAKE PART IN MUG'96. ALL WHO MAKE RESERVATIONS WILL BE MAILED A MAP TO THE CONFERENCE AS CONFIRMATION OF THEIR RESERVATION.

IF YOU HAVE OR WILL RESERVE DEMO TIME, PLEASE LET US KNOW THE EXACT SUBJECT OF YOUR PRESENTATION BY THIS APRIL 1. THIS WILL ALLOW US ENOUGH TIME TO SET UP AND PUBLISH THE DEMONSTRATION/PRESENTATION SCHEDULE. PRESENTATIONS AT MUG'96 WILL BE SCHEDULED IN 30 - 45 MINUTE SESSIONS. THIS IS BECAUSE THERE IS ONE LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM AVAILABLE TO US AT THE NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY. WE SHOULD STILL BE ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE TWELVE 45 MINUTE DEMOS DURING THE CONFERENCE.

ONE LAST WORD OF ADVICE ....

TABLES AND/OR DEMO TIME ***CANNOT*** BE RESERVED OR ALLOCATED ON SET-UP DAY (MAY 24) OR CONFERENCE DAY (MAY 25).

HELP US TO HELP YOU ...

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. WE CAN NOT ASSUME THAT ALL WHO HAD ATTENDED THE CONFERENCES AT LIMA CAN OR WILL ATTEND MUG'96 IN BROOK PARK THIS YEAR.

CONTACT: GLENN BERNASEK 13246 HARPER ROAD STRONGSVILLE, OHIO 44136

PHONE: (216) 846-0865 (After 9:00 pm EST) (ALL MESSAGES ***WILL*** BE ANSWERED!)

E-MAIL: dd314**Cleveland.Freenet.Edu**

SEE YOU AT **** MUG'96 ****

From: lucid@indy.net (William M. Lucid) Date: 19 Feb 1996 17:44:31 GMT

The Archiver vversion modified for HFDC use by Tim Tesch is available on the Hoosier Users Group SI BBS (317) 782-9942 8N1 9600 baud.

Also available PORT beta version by Tim Tesch.

Callers can download on first call.

William M. Lucid, HUG Co-sysop

From polivka@gwis.com Tue Mar 5 16:13:34 EST 1996

If you haven't done so already, please check out my TI-99/4A web page at: http://w3.gwis.com/~polivka/994apg.html

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Topics covered include- TI product suppliers list, software info, trade/sell links, MUG info, TI FAQ, TI-99/4A pinouts, TI timeline, MICROreviews, TI Chips Users Group info, TI screen saves, Emulator info, link to TI cartrige list, TI-99/4A related links

As indicated on the page, I have not created most of the content of the page. It has been supplied to me by many generous people, and I wish to thank them all for their help. I have been attempting to 'archive' as much 99/4A information as possibe in order to make it available to anyone who finds it of interest. If you have anything that you feel would be of interest, please e-mail me. I have fallen behind on updates due to a recent trip, but please keep checking the page for changes!

Rich Polivka

From: aa726@cleveland.Freenet.Edu (Deanna Sheridan)
Subject: Re: FTP TI CDROM? Date: 10 Mar 1996 21:36:23 GMT

The CD-Rom is available from Millbrae CD Rom, P.O. Box 1388 Millbrae, CA 94030 and costs $100.00. This entitles you to four (4) updates which is supposed to fill up the disk completely. I just got my first issue about a week ago and have not had the time to really look at it yet.

DONE

CHRIS BOBBITT'S ASGARD ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A few years ago during the go-go days of the 99/4A, Asgard Software and its founder Chris Bobbitt were important parts of the TI community. As business declined Chris sold out and moved up to bigger and better computer things. We recently found his resume on the internet at http://www.cais.net/fmg//bobbitt.clb.htm and obtained his permission to reprint the part that describes Asgard. The size of his Asgard operation may suprise you.

11/83-10/92 Founded Asgard Software initially while attending High School. Accomplishments include:

--Published over 150 software products by 40+ contracting authors - employing between 1988-1989 12 part-time programmers

--Produced and sold over 100,000 pieces of software during the life of the company to an estimated 25,000 customers - maintained a customer list of 17,000 nam es and addresses

--Maintained a dealer network with 35 local dealers and 4 nationwide distributors

--Attended 7-10 trade shows a year internationally between 1984-1990

--Generated $225,000 in gross income in our peak year of 1989

--Managed a staff of two full-time programmers, two full time assistants in 19 88-1989

--Published a quarterly direct mail catalog from 1987-1992 accounting for 60% of income

--Designed and implemented "electronic mall stores" for retail credit card sales of our products on CompuServe and Delphi on-line information services

--Received over 200 products reviews in four computer trade magazines between 1983-1992

Founded Asgard Publishing unit in 1988. Accomplishments include:

--Published three books

--Published a quarterly magazine from 1988-1991 - paid circulation of 1100

Founded Asgard Peripherals unit in 1989. Accomplishments include:

--Designed and produced eight cartridge-distributed computer software products - 7,500 cartridges sold between 1989-1992

--Designed and produced a computer mouse that became the leader in its market with over 1000 units sold

--Designed and produced a memory expansion board involving a design team of eight individuals in seven states and two countries and a 24 month development cycle

---

Sold all units to partners in 1992.

DONE

THINGS THAT HAVE COME AND GONE AND SOME THAT NEVER WERE

article by Bill Gaskill
April 1996

OLDIES BUT GOODIES: If your newsletter editor has the space, I've sent a couple of flyers again. One is a really

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neat and informative technical type drawing of a Shugart style floppy disk drive. The other flyer contains a really great illustration of TI's TI-74 BASICALC programmable calculator. I included it for you "Anything TI" buffs like me to enjoy. It comes compliments of Houston User Group member Richard Lumpkin.

TI MINI-WRITER WORD PROCESSOR - Among the first "serious productivity" packages I ever purchased for my TI-99/4A was the Tex*Comp Mini-Writer Word Processor, with TI's Mini Memory cartridge and the Axiom GP-100TI unidirectional printer, sold as a package for $249.95. It was GREAT! I'd never seen anything quite so neat.

Too many years ago to even think about, I sold the entire setup to another 99er in town and moved up to a fully packed Peripheral Expansion Box, TI Writer, an Epson, EX-800 printer and all the other "goodies" I could through into my word processing efforts. In the interim I have tried a variety of other word processors, and found that all have strengths and weaknesses. Among my favorites are Companion, which I found on the GiveAway table at Fest-West '94 in Tucson, and Bruce Harrison's Word Processor, which is just about the easiest piece of software I have ever owned.

Recently, Jim Reynolds, a good friend and former 99er from Martinez, GA sent me a package full of 99/4A goodies that he no longer uses. Among them was a copy of Mini-Writer v1.0 copyright 1983 by Model Masters (Bill Moseid)! Boy was that a neat gift and a great surprise! Needless to say I pulled out my handiest Mini Memory cartridge, loaded the Mini-Writer software from its cassette using my original TI PHP 2700 program recorder into the Mini Memory and proceeded to crank out a quick letter. It was that easy.

Like Navarone's Console Writer, or their Homework Helper, which are essentially the same program, Mini-Writer holds about a page and a half of text before you need to save it and start on another file for the next page. The drawback is that, unlike TI Writer, you never know how close you are to the end of that 1 1/2 pages limit until you hit it. Regardless, because it was written in 100% assembly language it is so much more sophisticated than ANY of the Extended BASIC word processors it is a true joy to use.

It sports a 24 line by 40 character window and uses most of the familiar TI Writer commands to move about the screen, it has full Insert and Delette capabilities, Block Copy and move, prints to any device, so you can save to PIO, RS232, or DSK#. devices, and it allows you to include printer format control codes. All-in-all, one really neat package for the bargain-basement word processor in 1983.

The instruction manual, written by Bill Moseid, is clear, conscise and well illustrated. In fact, compare to some of his later documentation creation efforts, I would say it was among his best.

CHANGING TI WRITER COLORS: This is among my oldest of favorites, which I first learned from Tim McEachern, the author of Wycove FORTH. It shows how easy it is to change the default monitor display colors that pop up in TI Writer when you first load it.

1. Initialize a new disk.
2. Copy the EDITA1 file onto the newly initialized disk.
3. The EDITA1 file will be saved beginning at sector >22.
4. Load you favorite sector editor and go to sector >22.
5. Beginning at address 00F4 you will se 5 hexidecimal numbers.

87F4 - White characters on blue background.
8713 - Black characters on green backgound.
87F3 - White characters on green background.
8717 - Black characters on cyan background.
87F1 - White characters on black background.

6. To alter the colors, change F4 or 13 or F3 or 17 or F1.
7. Below is a listing of the 16 available colors in hexidecimal codes.

0 - Transparent
1 - Black
2 - Medium Green
3 - Light green
4 - Dark Blue
5 - Light Blue
6 - Dark Red
7 - Cyan
8 - Medium Red
9 - Light Red
A - Dark Yellow
B - Light Yellow
C - Dark Green
D - Magenta
E - Gray
F - White

Change the codes to the desired color combinations and write the new sector to disk. You are done except for copying EDITA2 and the format programs to the new disk.

CALL LOADS - Here's a quick collection of some of my favorite and most useful XB CALL LOADs. Most if not all you have seen before, I just wanted to make sure they didn't get lost in the shuffle of old newsletters that never get read. Unless you have the Triton/MG Super Extended BASIC command module, I will assume that you have already typed in CALL INIT prior to trying each CALL LOAD.

CALL LOAD(-31931,0) - unprotected an Extended BASIC program that has been saved with the SAVE PROGNAME,PROTECTED

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command.

CALL LOAD (-31806,16) - disables the QUIT key so you can't accidently hit it and loose all of you programming in memory.

CALL LOAD (-31806,0) - re-enables the QUIT key.

CALL PEEK(2,A,B,) :: CALL LOAD(-31804,A,B) - causes a program to quit to the 99/4A's Color Bar screen.

ORPHAN CHRONICLES:

Many will remember the tremendous success that Ron Albright achieved with his ORPHAN CHRONICLES book, but few recall the followup book of sorts named THE ORPHANS SURVIVAL HANDBOOK which showed up in late 1986-early 1987. Here's the text of the "book's" official release announcement.

ANNOUNCING THE NEW
ALL DIFFERENT BOOK

BY
RON ALBRIGHT
THE ORPHANS SURVIVAL HANDBOOK"

Ron Albright reports...
"The first book, "The Orphan Chronics", was ABOUT you-the Texas Instruments 99/4A enthusiast. Now, there is a book BY you. The "Orphans Survival Handbook" is the one-stop information source for the TI User.

"The ORPHANS SURVIVAL HANDBOOK" was both easier and harder to put together than was the 'Orphan Chronicles'. Easier in that it was already written! It is an anthology of material gleaned from literally hundreds of user group newsletters and hundreds of hours of downloaded filed (sic) from bulletin board systems. It is the "Best of" you the TI user group members, hackers, programmers, newsletter editors. Why, then, was it difficult? There was so much quality material available! The hardest thing was not finding enough material, it was deciding what I could leave out!"

"The "ORPHANS SURVIVAL HANDBOOK" is a 200-page plus compendium of TI material. It is filled with schematics, hardware hacks, program tips, and tutorials from all across the country. Where to call, where and what to buy, and what to read. Moreover, it contains new, "never-before-seen" material from some of the brightest minds in the TI Community (too numerous to name them all). Looseleaf and three-hole punched, the manual can be placed conveniently in a binder for easy access. And updates (which are planned for registered owners) can be easily incorporated into your "Handbook" as new insights and developments become available. While I can't guarantee the "Handbook" will have "everything you wanted to know", I can assure you that it has most everything I could think of, NOW AND LATER. This handbook will continue to grow..in comprehensiveness and in its personal value to you.!"

Projected retail price is $16.95.

PUBLISHED BY:
Disk Only Software
P.O. Box 244
Lorton, VA 22079

1-800-446-4462. At the tone, enter 897335 for message. Voice information is (301) 340-7179.

NEW PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES: The following article excerpts were written by Doug Bohrer and Ted A. Bear. They originally appeared in a DEC Users Group newsletter then wound up in the February 1986 issue of Don and Lucy Veith's National 99er, which you may recall was published out of Bakersfield, CA. I have only included one portion, VAL6OL, from the original article. I found it the most humorous.

VAL6OL - From its modest beginnings in Southern California's San Fernando Valley, VAL6OL is enjoying aa dramatic surge of popularity across the country. VAL6OL commands include REALLY, LIKE, WELL, Y'KNOW. Variables are assigned with =LIKE and =TOTALLY operators. Other operators include California Gooleans, AX and NOWAY. Repitions of code are handled in the FOR - SURE loops. A sample program is shown below.

```
LIKE, Y'KNOW (I MEAN) START

    IF PIZZA       = LIKE BITCHEN AND
       GUY         =TUBULAR AND
       VALLEY GIRL =LIKE GRODY**MAX(FERSURE)**2

THEN

    FOR I = LIKE 1 TO OH*MAYBE 100
          BARF(I) = TOTALLY GROSS(OUT)

    SURE

LIKE THIS PROGRAM
REALLY
LIKE TOTALLY (Y'KNOW)
IM*SURE
GOTO THE MALL
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NAVARONE DATA BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

This month we'll begin discussing the Navarone Data Base Management System and how you can get the most out of it for your money. Section I this month deals with what I call the

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"Quick-Start" section that lets you get the program up and running without having to read the manual.

QUICK START-File setup:

The next few pages provide a step-by-step method for getting DBMS up and running (using a sample data base) without having to read through the entire manual.

1 - Have a newly formatted disk ready to use for data storage.

2 - Insert the DBMS module into the 99/4A's cartridge port.

3 - Power up your system in the normal fashion.

4 - Insert the DBMS program disk into drive 1.

5 - Press the number 2 key to display the 4A's menu of options.

6 - Press option 3, DBM SETUP.

7 - Press <ENTER> when prompted for SETUP file name.

8 - Press <ENTER> when you see the cursor flashing in the middle of the top screen line, then hit the spacebar once.

9 - Type in the field name SUBJECT: and then press <ENTER> twice.

10 - Hit the spacebar once and then press Fctn 2 (INSERT) 30 times to create the data input block for the SUBJECT field. A solid red line should creep across the screen. Use Fctn 1 to delete spaces from the red line if you go too far.

11 - Press <ENTER> twice and then the spacebar once. Type in the word TYPE :. Note the three spaces between the end of the word and the colon.

12 - Use Fctn 2 again to insert a 22 character long data input block for the TYPE: field, starting on the same line, immediately after the colon.

13 - Press <ENTER> three times.

14 - Press the spacebar once. Type in the word SOURCE1:.

15 - Use Fctn 2 to create a 22 character long data input block for the 16 - Press <ENTER> and hit the spacebar once then type in the word DATE :. Three spaces between the word and the colon again.

17 - Use Fctn 2 to insert a 5 character long data input block for the DATE : field.

18 - Move the cursor nine spaces to the right of the end of the red data input block for the DATE : field and then type in the word PAGE:.

19 - Use Fctn 2 to insert a 3 character long data input block.

20 - Press <ENTER> twice and repeat steps 14-19 so that you end up with a screen layout like the one illustrated below.

```
Subject:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Type   :XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Source1:XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Date   :XXXXX          Page:XXX

Source2:XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Date   :XXXXX          Page:XXX

Source3:XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Date   :XXXXX          Page:XXX

Source4:XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Date   :XXXXX          Page:XXX
```

21 - Move the cursor to the left edge of the red colored data input block for the SUBJECT: field and then press Fctn 6 (PROC'D).

22 - Press <ENTER> once and then type in an UPPER case Y at the prompt asking "Is this a key field?".

23 - Press Fctn 6 to return to the layout screen, then press Fctn 9 (BACK).

24 - INSERT THE NEWLY FORMATTED DATA DISK INTO DSK1.

25 - Press Y at the "AUTO-SEQUENCE?" prompt.

26 - Type in DSK1.INDEX for the Data File name, then press <ENTER>.

27 - Type in DSK1.INDEXSETUP for the SETUP file name. Press <ENTER>.

28 - Press Fctn = (QUIT) and then Y at the prompt asking if you really want to quit.

QUICK START-Report definition:

To define a report for our sample data base you will need to insert the DBMS disk into DSK1 and then select option 4, DBM REPORTS, from the menu.

The report generator program first prompts you for the SETUP file name. If you want to take existing fields from the record layout screen and cut and paste them to the report format, then enter the DSK1.INDEXSETUP file name. If you would like to create a custom report format from scratch then just press <ENTER> at the SETUP file prompt. I will tell you up front that it is much easier to use the existing SETUP file.

The cut and paste method loads the SETUP file (INDEXSETUP) and displays it on screen. To cut and paste you would simply press Fctn 7 (AID) to invoke the format editor and then move the cursor to the beginning of a field (the red bar area, not the field name) to be moved. Pressing Control or Fctn M will "grab" the field and then allow you to use the arrow keys to move it around the screen into the desired position. Once there, a keypress of any un-Controlled or un-Functioned key will drop the field at the position of the cursor. How's that for simplicity? Let's try it for our sample data base.

1 - Insert the DBMS program disk into DSK1 and then press any key to bring up the DBMS menu. Press 4 for DBM REPORTS.

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2 - At the SETUP file prompt type in DSK1.INDEXSETUP and then press <ENTER>.

3 - Press Fctn 7 (AID) when the custom field layout screen appears.

4 - Use the arrow keys to move the cursor to row 1, column 8. Type in the word Subject: and then move the cursor to the first space in the red data input block for the Subject: field from the custom field layout.

5 - Press Fctn M. The cursor changes to a more or less oval shape. You have just "cut" the data input block.

6 - Use the arrow keys to move the data input block upwards to row 1, column 16. Press <ENTER>. You have just "pasted" the data input block into the new position. Note that the cursor has now changed back to its normal shape.

7 - Use the arrow keys to move down to the S in the word Subject: in the custom field layout screen area. Spacebar over the eight characters that make up that field name.

8 - Move the cursor to row 1, column 47 and enter the word TYPE:.

9 - Move to the TYPE: field data input block in the custom field layout screen area and press Fctn M to grab it. Carry it upwards to row 1 and then move to the right until the cursor is positioned over column 52. Press <ENTER>.

10 - Now move to row 3, column 8 and type in the word SOURCE1: and then move to row 3, column 44 and type in SOURCE2:.

11 - Move to row 4, column 8 and type in DATE:. Then to row 4, column 30 and type in PAGE:. On the same row move to column 44, type in DATE: and then type in PAGE: beginning at column 66 on row 4.

12 - Move the cursor down to the custom field layout screen area and then cut and paste the SOURCE1 and DATE and PAGE data input blocks for SOURCE1: so that they are positioned immediately after the colon for the appropriate field.

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13 - When you are done with the cut and paste move back down to the custom field layout screen area and use the spacebar to erase SOURCE1 and its DATE and PAGE field names and then SOURCE2 and its DATE and PAGE field names.

14 - SOURCE3 and SOURCE4 go on row 6. SOURCE1 is positioned at column 8, SOURCE4 at column 44. The DATE and PAGE fields for each are positioned underneath the appropriate SOURCE(s) in row 7.

15 - Press Fctn 9 (BACK) and then type in DSK1.INDEXRPT1. Press <ENTER>. The custom report format is saved to disk for use now or at any later date.

QUICK START-Sorting files:

1 - Insert the DBMS program disk into drive 1 and then press any key from the color bar screen.

2 - Press 5 to access DBM SORT. When the SORT program is loaded insert the data file disk into drive 1.

3 - At the first prompt (ENTER SOURCE FILE) type in DSK1.INDEX and then press <ENTER>.

4 - Type in DSK1.INDEXSORT to name the output file that is created by the sort routine.

5 - Type in 1 for the position of the SORT SELECTION FIELD and then Press <ENTER>.

6 - When the prompt "STRING" scrolls up press <ENTER> again.

7 - Press <ENTER> to ignore the E for EQUALS or N for NOT-EQUALS prompt.

8 - Enter 1 at the SORT KEY: 1 prompt.

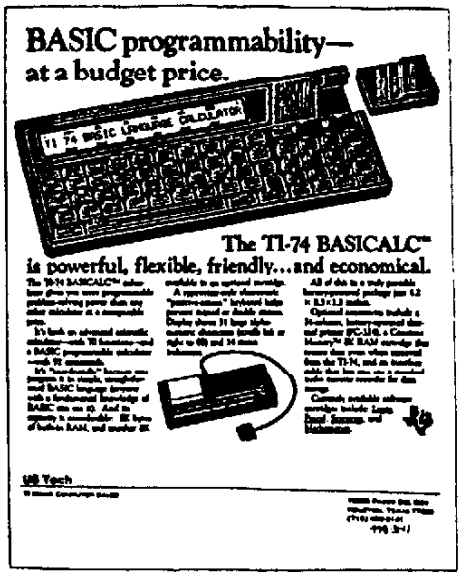
9 - Press <ENTER> again and then type in 30 at the LENGTH prompt.

10 - Press <ENTER> and then type in A for an Ascending sort at the DIRECTION prompt.

11 - Press <ENTER> and then <ENTER> again when prompted for the SORT KEY: 2 input. The sort process will then begin.

12 - When the sort is completed press Fctn = to quit.

DONE



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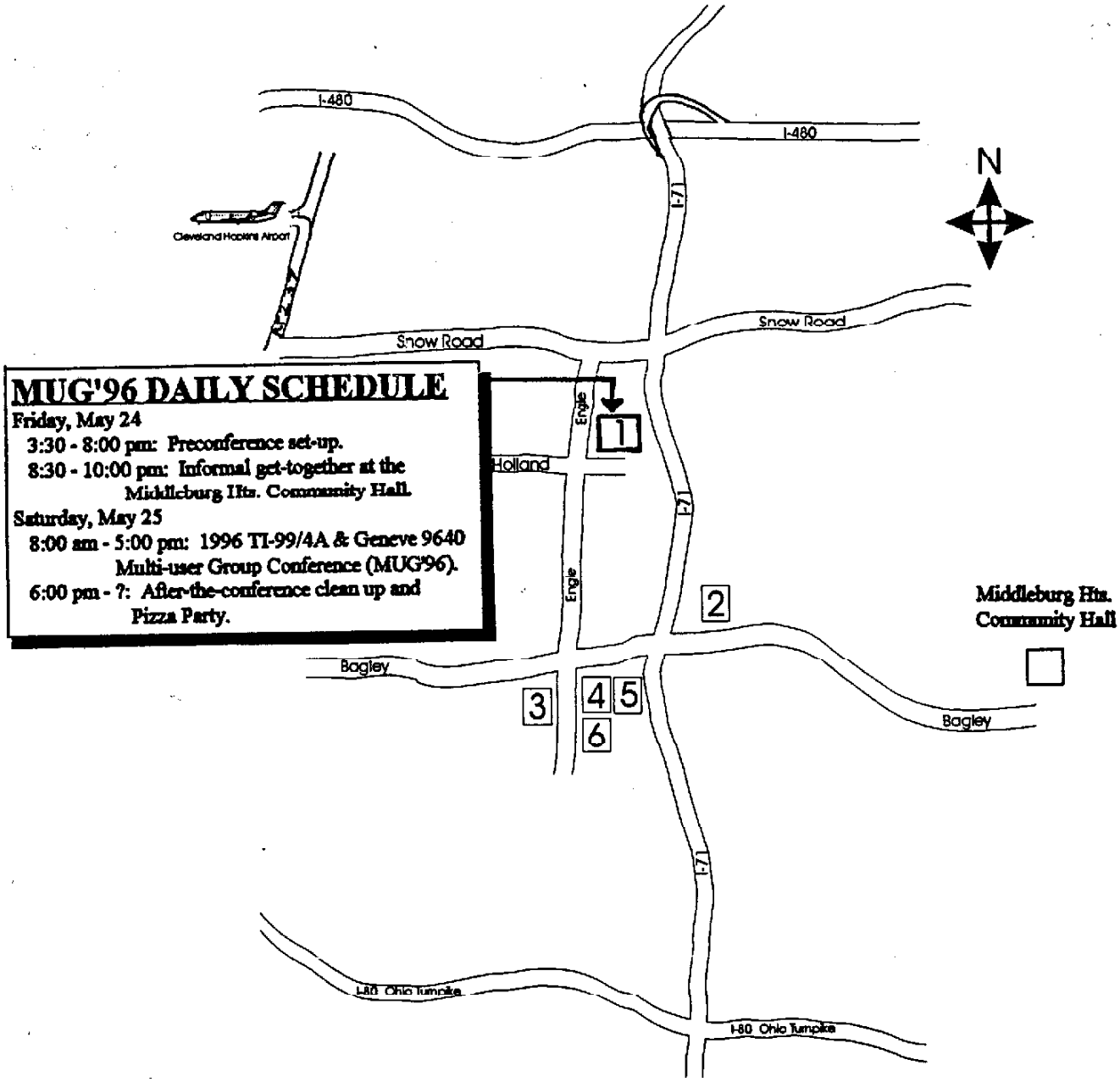

MUG'96 DAILY SCHEDULE

Friday, May 24

3:30 - 8:00 pm: Preconference set-up.

8:30 - 10:00 pm: Informal get-together at the Middleburg Hts. Community Hall.

Saturday, May 25

8:00 am - 5:00 pm: 1996 TI-99/4A & Geneve 9640 Multi-user Group Conference (MUG'96).

6:00 pm - ?: After-the-conference clean up and Pizza Party.

1=Brook Park Armory
(Conference Hall)
2=Harley Hotel
216-243-5200
3=Holiday Inn
216-243-4040
4=Motel 6
216-234-0990
5=Red Roof Inn
216-243-2441
6=Cross Country Inn
216-243-2277

*** WELCOME TO ***

THE 1996 TI-99/4A AND GENEVE 9640 MULTI-USER GROUPS CONFERENCE

YOUR RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED.
WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT MUG'96!
(If you're giving a demo, please mail the subject to us ASAP.)

c/o Glenn Bernasek
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